

Stakeholders and Perspectives

Persons or groups with a vested interest in an issue

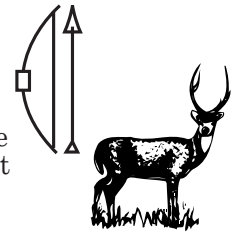
Points of view - ways of looking at issues

The stakeholders are affected both by the problem and by the solution.

Note to teachers: For the conflict resolution activities that follow, these "stakeholder cards" can be photocopied and cut so that students can "draw" a card rather than simply selecting one with a point of view they find compatible with their own!

Hunter

This has always been a hunting community. The local people enjoy hunting deer and small game, and we use the meat to feed ourselves and our families. Most of us are not trophy hunters, and we don't get many folks from outside the area who need guides. I am worried that red wolves will deplete the supply of game. Sure, we have a lot of deer around here, but sometimes, if we get a bad winter, the white-tail have a hard time of it. I am also concerned that if red wolves are reintroduced, there will be pressure to stop hunting altogether. Money from hunting licenses is a source of income for the state, and some of that money is used to protect wildlife and habitat. Hunting is a way of life around here. Hunters want to be sure that deer and small game are not stressed by a top predator like the red wolf.



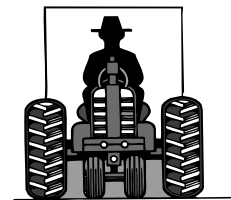
Red Wolf Biologist

So little is known about red wolves in the wild. Few studies were done, and red wolves were almost extinct before field research could be done and data collected. Red wolves are shy and elusive, and it is hard to do observations of their behavior in the wild. The Captive Management Program taught us a lot, but we still have much to learn about this beautiful and tenacious animal. The radio-collared wolves in the restoration area have taught us a lot about how the red wolf lives and hunts and about its pack structure. We are deeply concerned about the potential for the red wolves breeding with resident coyotes. This is a problem for which we are seeking solutions. Coyotes are an exotic species here; they are not native to North Carolina. Red wolves are. High Pines State Park is one of the few areas that has very few coyotes, thus making it an ideal recovery site.



Farmer

I have a herd of dairy cattle. My neighbor raises beef cattle and sheep. Our income depends on our livestock. If red wolves live around here and start killing our cattle and sheep, we will lose money. We aren't rich, and we can't afford to lose livestock. We have enough trouble with coyotes around here as it is. But at least it's not against the law to shoot a coyote. But red wolves are endangered. I could go to jail or have to pay a big fine if I kill a red wolf. Maybe both. I don't have anything against wolves or any other wild animal. But something has to be done to make sure my interests are protected if wolves are restored to this area. I just barely get by some years as it is, and red wolves would just add to my list of worries.



Resort Owner

I depend on visitors to the High Pines State Park. The park attracts hikers, river runners, and hunters. Families come because of the recreational opportunities in the park. I admit I have a few concerns about public safety. We don't have to worry much about bears around here except when people ignore common sense and leave food around. We have heard that red wolves are shy and stay away from people. But what if they lose their fear of humans? Could there be problems? Would people try to attract them with food so they could see them and take pictures? The whole idea of having red wolves in this area kind of intrigues me, but some plan would have to be worked out so the public would accept them but so they wouldn't try to get them to hang around campsites like dogs. Red wolves might actually be good for business because we could sell mugs and t-shirts in our gift shop. We could even help with an education program if someone would sponsor one.



Animal Rights Activist

Animals have as much right to live as humans do. It is wrong for humans to kill animals for their own purposes and



to replace their habitats with shopping malls, subdivisions, and roads. Red wolves are a prime example of how humans can

destroy an entire species. Red wolves were rescued only after having been pushed to the brink of extinction by humans. The future of this animal is still in jeopardy. It is time for us humans to reconsider our place in the scheme of life on earth. In the case of red wolves, humans should find ways to coexist with these magnificent predators. No animal except man has ever caused the artificial extinction of hundreds of species by exploiting plants and animals and their habitats. It is time to halt this destructive process and, as Thoreau and others suggested, to work out some relation to wildness.

The Red Wolf

"I am a hunter's hunter; my track a sign of hope, its absence a warning,"

(Christopher Camuto). I was here long before settlers came from across the seas. I am Wa'ya to the Cherokee, principal clan animal to the Ani-Wa'ya, the Wolf people. I am a provider; a loyal mate,



a devoted parent. I am responsible for my pups and for making sure they know how to hunt in order to survive. I am a carnivore. I depend on deer and small mammals to live. We red wolves have evolved over thousands of years with our prey. We have to kill to live. We have no other food source. Successful hunting is hard and dangerous. We have never caused the extinction of another species. We are blamed for declines in prey populations, but that is an unfair accusation. We would never cause our own extinction by eliminating our food source. Every healthy ecosystem needs summit predators. Our role is vital.

The Local Resident

Many of us have lived in this area for generations. We don't farm, but we own small businesses. Many of us see no reason to reintroduce an animal that has not lived here for many years. We worry



that an endangered species means property restrictions. What if a red wolf pack takes up residence on the

twenty acres I own in the park? Could I build a cabin if a wolf pack has a den there? It is against the law to kill an endangered animal. But what if I need to protect my children and pets? I am not clear on how the law works in that case. I don't hate wolves, and I don't believe that fairy tale stuff. But I don't think red wolves belong here. They belong in an area where there are fewer people. What if wolves lose their fear of people because they are protected? Would little kids be in danger? How would their numbers be controlled?

Environmentalist Naturalist

Top predators are essential to a healthy ecosystem. Red wolves play an important role in a well-balanced ecosystem. Too many ungulates such as white-tailed deer cause extensive



damage to vegetation, and even with the hunting season, some hard winters, and natural mortality, their numbers are increasing. We need

red wolves for the natural control of the deer and to ensure that the strongest and healthiest animals survive to breed. Red wolves generally do not kill livestock as long as their natural prey is plentiful. Coyotes sometimes kill livestock, and although coyotes are surprisingly scarce in this area, their numbers could increase in the absence of a top predator. One reason we are considering High Pines for red wolf recovery is the absence of large numbers of coyotes. This factor could help red wolves recover in the wild without the danger of being hybridized out of existence. Here is a chance for humans to do something positive to help an endangered animal!

Visitor Hiker Camper

I live in the city, but my family and I come here every year to enjoy the outdoors. We want our children to experience nature and wildlife, and that includes hearing red wolves howl and finding tracks - maybe even seeing them. We hear conflicting



information about whether or not red wolves could be dangerous to

humans. We need accurate information. We plan to teach our children responsible behavior toward all wildlife. We don't want a situation like we sometimes have with bears where they have to be destroyed because they become nuisances around campsites when people leave food around. We would hate to see the same thing happen with wolves. We need to work on public education.

Wildlife Management Officials

Everyone wants wild areas and wildlife for some personal or economic reason. We are trying to find a balance here between the demands for recreation, solitude, wildlife habitat, and jobs. The truth is, there is something for everyone - including the red wolf. What needs to happen is



for everyone to compromise. People can't just be out for themselves and their personal interests any longer. We have to look at the big picture

together; and maybe we will all have to adjust our thinking about what's important. Maybe farmers can re-think their livestock-raising practices. Maybe hunters will see the health of the deer herds improve with a top predator around. Maybe hikers can hear the howl of a wolf. Maybe, just maybe, we will ALL benefit from the return of the red wolf.